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ABSTRACT

This investigation focused on the following major goals: a) to identify problem areas in student-teaching experiences as perceived by student teachers; b) to identify problem areas in student-teaching experiences as perceived by supervising teachers; and c) to compare the problem areas identified by the two target groups. During the term that student teachers were in the schocls, weekly seminars were conducted in order to identify, discuss, and try to solve student teaching problems that occurred in the classroom. After reviewing the problems, 50 were selected and rated as to degree of severity by over 500 student teachers. These problems were then rated by the supervising teachers for their degree of severity. The areas that emerged as relevant were listed as administrative functions, discipline of students, problems of student peer grcups, motivation of students, and policies of school and school systems. Of the five areas of perceived student teaching problems that were identified, two (discipline and administration) emerged with lcw correlations between the two groups of student teachers and supervising teachers. (Author)

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OF STUDENT TEACHER'S PERCEIVED PROBLEMS TO THOSE OF SUPERVISING TEACHERS

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP OF STUDENT TEACHER'S PERCEIVED PROBLEMS TO THOSE OF SUPERVISING TEACHERS

Objectives

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between student-teacher and supervising-teacher perceived problems. The investigation was focused on the following major goals:

1. To identify problem areas in student-teaching experiences as perceived by student teachers.
2. To identify problem areas in student-teaching experiences as perceived by supervising teachers.
3. To compare the problem areas identified by the two target groups.

Theoretical Framework

It has been said that since each student teaching assignment is unique, no two student teachers will have identical problems, nor can the problems be handled by the application of simple solutions. Experience has shown, however, that general problem areas may be analyzed and discussed in the classroom. The identification of specific problem areas for study has been a concern of various teacher training institutions. Harrow, Dziuban, and Rothberg (1972) investigated student teacher problems and concluded that certain areas could be systematically categorized. They recommended, however, the categorization of those problems should be reviewed by supervising teachers for verification.

During the practice teaching experience when student-teachers were in the schools, weekly seminars were conducted to identify, discuss, and derive possible solutions for problems which had occurred. It was during the period of weekly seminars that problems were identified in student teaching. Problems that the student teachers were having were collected on a weekly basis. There problems were reviewed as to their relationships to each other....Fifty problems were

selected. (Table 1) Each was then rated as to their degree of severity by the student teachers.

Neal, Butts, and Clemmons (1971) stated that the teacher problem is at hand when a mental or physical difficulty which demands reflective thinking presents itself. If the problems are to be solved by the student teacher in the best interests of the pupil in a learning situation, supervising teachers should be aware of that which confronts the student teacher as a problem.

Theoretically, the teacher education program should give the student teacher the knowledge, skill, and attitude needed to fulfill the needs of a successful teacher. The grouping of the problems by the students were then considered as problems by the supervising teachers.

Methods and Data Source

The Student Teaching Problem Questionnaire was administered to sixty-two student teachers and sixty-two supervising teachers (N=124). Each of the problems was rated using a five point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The items for the entire sample were intercorrelated and that matrix subjected to an incomplete principal components resolution. Components were retained for rotation corresponding to the eigenvalues of the matrix greater than one and rotated according to the direct oblimin criterion ($\Delta = 0$). Pattern coefficients absolutely greater than .3 were utilized for interpretation purposes.

Upon determination of the interpretable components, the sallient items for each were summed. Those scores between the student and supervising teacher groups were then analyzed utilizing multivariate analyses of varience. The model for the procedure is $X = A\xi + \varepsilon$ where X is the matrix of cell means, A is the appropriate design matrix,

ξ is the matrix of parameters to be estimated, and ε is the matrix of error variates. Univariate and step-down F ratios were also computed for the dependent measures.

Results

The component solution produced five interpretable dimensions which were named as follows:

GROUP I DISCIPLINE

6.	Students not staying in seats.	.339
7.	Students always causing a disturbance.	.653
9.	Students picking on other students verbally.	.507
14.	Students refusing directions.	.556
18.	Students talking back.	.778
20.	Students cursing.	.789
21.	Students refusing to do any work or participate.	.573
22.	Students fighting.	.746
23.	Students suspended return to school anyway.	.403
25.	Students taking equipment (stealing).	.340
34.	Student assistant not helping teacher.	.386

GROUP II MOTIVATION

2.	Students not bringing supplies to class.	.498
8.	Students skipping school and class.	.385
10.	Students not prepared.	.619
12.	Students lack of attention.	.309
13.	Small group of students asking and answering most of teacher's questions.	.318
15.	Students never finishing homework.	.665
30.	Students not doing assignment work.	.778
35.	Pep rallies called on short notice.	.474

GROUP III POLICIES

23.	Students suspended returning to school.	.324
29.	Most students in class failing test.	.339
41.	Films arriving at wrong time.	.394
46.	Wrong numbers on classroom doors.	.7071
47.	Teacher gives assignment and intern will have to follow up.	.868
48.	Teacher giving a test to student to take home and do when intern meant for it to be given in class.	.811
49.	Overhearing students talk about stealing.	.506
50.	Teacher says that you are teaching too slow.	.605

GROUP IV STUDENT PEER GROUPS

3.	Girls not sitting properly.	.901
4.	Girls combing hair and putting make-up on in class.	.664
5.	Students exchanging homework to finish it.	.645
11.	Boys putting hands on girls.	.373
31.	Gum chewing in class.	.326

GROUP V ADMINISTRATION

17.	Students knocking on desk.	.379
32.	Students loud in discussions.	.307
35.	Pep rallies called on short notice.	.332
36.	Ditto machines in use.	.737
40.	Classes with an over abundance of one sex.	.647
44.	Failure of lights.	.495
49.	Overhearing students talk about stealing.	.314

The multivariate F ratio for the group comparison of 2.07 (D.F. 5, 118) revealed a probability of less than.0736. The univariate F's showed Discipline ($P < .04$) and administration ($P < .063$)

to have low associated alpha error rates. In both cases the student teacher viewed these as more serious problems than the supervising teachers. The correlations among the dependent measures ranged from .61 to .24. For practical purposes, the results revealed a difference in the two groups involving perceptions of discipline and administration. (Table II & III)

Conclusions and Importance

An analysis of the data revealed that at least five main areas of study might be included in curriculum development for an effective student teacher preparation program. The five areas of study which emerged as relevant to effective student teacher preparation program concerned administrative functions, discipline of students, problems of student peer groups, motivation of students, and policies of the school and school system.

Of the five perceived student-teaching problem areas which were identified, two (discipline and administration) emerged with low associated probabilities between the two target groups. Supervising teachers perceived discipline of students and administrative functions as being minor problem areas. Where as student-teachers perceived just the opposite. The results of this study may have an impact on curriculum change for teacher training institutions.

TABLE I

PROBLEMS IN STUDENT TEACHING

1. Students who are so tired they don't seem to be able to keep their eyes open during class.
2. Students not bringing supplies to class.
3. Girls not sitting properly.
4. Girls combing hair and putting make-up on in class.
5. Students exchanging homework to finish it.
6. Students not staying in seats.
7. Students always causing a disturbance.
8. Students picking on other students verbally.
9. Students not prepared.
10. Students lack of attention.
11. Boys putting hands on girls.
12. Students lack of attention.
13. Small group of students asking and answering most of teacher's questions.
14. Students refusing directions.
15. Students never finishing homework.
16. Students changing answers on test when being reviewed.
17. Students knocking of desk.
18. Students talking back.
19. Teacher seems to be calling the class down the entire period.
20. Students cursing.
21. Students refusing to do any work or participate.
22. Students fighting.
23. Student suspended returns to school anyway.
24. Students taking medicine.
25. Students taking equipment (stealing).

26. Students smoking on school grounds.

27. Lack of school spirit.

28. Students who are slow learners.

29. Most students in class failing test.

30. Students not doing assignment work.

31. Gum chewing in class.

32. Students loud in discussions.

33. Students under influence of drugs.

34. Student assistant not helping teacher.

35. Pep rallies called on short notice.

36. Ditto machines in use.

37. Student control at assembly.

38. Restrooms locked (prevent smoking).

39. Classes without books.

40. Classes with an over abundance of one sex.

41. Films arriving at wrong time.

42. Not enough supplies.

43. Not being able to use gym or classroom when needed.

44. Failure of lights.

45. Photographers taking pictures in gym.

46. Wrong numbers on classroom doors.

47. Teacher gives assignment and intern will have to follow up.

48. Teacher giving a test to student to take home and do when intern meant for it to be given in class.

49. Overhearing students talk about stealing.

50. Teacher says that you are teaching too slow.

TABLE II

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR THE DEPENDENT MEASURES

	Students		Supervisors	
	$\bar{X}$	σ	$\bar{X}$	σ
Discipline	34.5	7.8	31.5	8.8
Motivation	27.4	5.3	27.8	5.1
Policies	14.9	3.0	15.3	3.2
Peer	21.5	5.6	19.9	5.6
Administration	19.6	4.1	18.1	4.9

TABLE III

RESULTS OF THE MULTIVARIATE
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Multivariate $F = 2.07$, $(D.F = 5,118)$ $P < .074$

Variable	HYP. M.S.	F	P
Discipline	288.07	4.17	.04
Motivation	6.32	.23	.63
Policies	3.55	.36	.54
Peer	77.56	2.49	.11
Administration	71.25	3.49	.06

Error Terms (within cells)
68.97
27.23
31.07
9.77
20.36

TEACHER COMMENTS

1. Student teachers face the same problems as the teacher because they are put into the same situation. More problems may arise because students may try to take advantage of student teachers. The student teacher may have problems affected by his or her personality that is different from the cooperating teacher.

2. Since the student teacher is the acting teacher, I believe the problems he or she would have would be the same as the teacher in field. Perhaps they would have a few more cases due to inexperience and needing to learn what solution best fits what problem.

3. On the whole, it was the consensus of the group that those problems that had been identified by student teachers, were, in the majority of cases, problems of most teachers in the field.

4. In a specific situation, any one of the fifty problems listed could be much more than trivial.

An experienced teacher will identify the most important problems and cope with only those for which there is a possible solution, moving from problem to problem toward a general improvement.

Student teachers may be inclined to state their problems in terms of, "The student won't....." where the experienced teacher will express the situation in such a way as to place himself in the center of the problem as, "I can not get .....", or "I must find a way.....".

A positive plan of action identifies the teacher as the one who has the problem, not the student.

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